

House File 697 - Introduced

HOUSE FILE 697

BY BROWN-POWERS

A BILL FOR

1 An Act relating to veterans health care services.

2 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

1 Section 1. NEW SECTION. **35A.19 Veterans case manager.**

2 1. For the purposes of this section:

3 *a. "Health care facility"* means a hospital as defined in
4 section 135B.1, or a health care facility as defined in section
5 144D.1.

6 *b. "Veterans health care facility"* means a health care
7 facility operated by the veterans health administration.

8 2. A veterans case manager shall be appointed by the
9 director, in consultation with the director of the department
10 of inspections and appeals and the director of human services,
11 to assist veterans in obtaining the greatest degree of health
12 care and health care benefits available and to promote policies
13 that would benefit veterans seeking health care. The case
14 manager shall serve at the pleasure of, and report directly to,
15 the director.

16 3. The veterans case manager shall perform the following
17 duties:

18 *a.* Act as an intermediary between health care facilities and
19 veterans health care facilities.

20 *b.* Assist health care facilities in the transfer of veterans
21 to veterans health care facilities.

22 *c.* Provide information to veterans and health care
23 facilities regarding health care services available to
24 veterans.

25 *d.* Apply for, receive, and administer federal aids, grants,
26 and gifts relating to inpatient health care services for
27 veterans.

28 *e.* Work with county veteran affairs offices to inform
29 veterans of benefits that may be available to veterans for
30 health care services.

31 *f.* Recommend to the department of inspections and appeals
32 standards and courses of study that fulfill the requirements of
33 section 272C.2C, subsection 1A.

34 *g.* Ensure that veterans are treated by health care
35 facilities with at least the same level of care as nonveterans.

1 *h.* Encourage physicians, nurses, and other individuals
2 working in health care who have military experience to work in
3 Iowa.

4 *i.* Inform Iowa residents who are veterans or currently
5 serving in the military about education, benefits, and support
6 available to obtain a degree or certification that would allow
7 the person to become a health care worker.

8 *j.* Collaborate with health care facilities in identifying,
9 upon a person's admission to a health care facility, the
10 person's eligibility for benefits through the United States
11 department of veterans affairs, including prescription drug
12 benefit eligibility, and programs with a focus on veterans.

13 *k.* Collaborate with the department of inspections and
14 appeals to identify any barriers to veterans in accessing
15 prescription drug benefits designated for veterans.

16 *l.* Assist health care facilities in amending rules and
17 procedures for medication administration to allow veterans
18 greater access to prescription drug benefits.

19 Sec. 2. Section 135B.1, Code 2021, is amended by adding the
20 following new subsections:

21 NEW SUBSECTION. 5. "*Veteran*" means the same as defined in
22 section 35.1.

23 NEW SUBSECTION. 6. "*Veterans case manager*" means the same
24 as described in the provisions of section 35A.19.

25 Sec. 3. Section 135B.7, Code 2021, is amended by adding the
26 following new subsections:

27 NEW SUBSECTION. 6. The department shall adopt rules
28 requiring hospitals, upon identifying a person requiring
29 inpatient health services as a veteran, to establish and
30 implement protocols providing for all of the following:

31 *a.* Contacting the veterans case manager regarding the
32 veteran's admission.

33 *b.* Identifying whether the veteran is at risk for causing
34 harm to the veteran's self or others.

35 *c.* Holding a veteran experiencing or at risk of experiencing

1 a mental health crisis for a period of not less than
2 twenty-three hours unless a court order dictates otherwise or
3 the patient is allowed to transfer to a veterans health care
4 facility as defined in section 35A.19.

5 d. Requiring the hospital to evaluate the veteran's mental
6 stability to determine if the veteran is a threat to the
7 safety of the veteran's self or others prior to the veteran's
8 discharge.

9 e. Preventing the hospital from treating a veteran with less
10 or different care than nonveteran patients solely because of a
11 person's veteran status.

12 NEW SUBSECTION. 7. The department, in consultation with the
13 department of veterans affairs, shall adopt rules that provide
14 that if a person is eligible for benefits through the United
15 States department of veterans affairs or any other third-party
16 payor, the payor of last resort for reimbursement to a hospital
17 is the medical assistance program established under chapter
18 249A. The rules shall also require the hospital to request
19 information from a person or a person's personal representative
20 regarding the person's veteran status and to report to the
21 veterans case manager only the names of persons identified as
22 potential veterans along with the names of their spouses and
23 any dependents. Information reported by the hospital shall be
24 verified by the department. This subsection shall not apply to
25 the admission of a person for outpatient health services.

26 NEW SUBSECTION. 8. The department shall adopt rules
27 that require hospitals to collaborate with the veterans case
28 manager to identify barriers veterans may face in obtaining
29 prescription drug benefits, and require, upon the admission
30 of a person eligible for benefits through the United States
31 department of veterans affairs to a hospital, the hospital
32 to cooperate with the veterans case manager to assess the
33 extent for which the person is eligible for prescription drug
34 benefits.

35 Sec. 4. Section 272C.2C, Code 2021, is amended by adding the

1 following new subsection:

2 NEW SUBSECTION. 1A. The board of medicine, board of
3 dentistry, board of physician assistants, board of podiatry,
4 and board of nursing shall establish rules requiring a person
5 licensed pursuant to section 148.3, 148C.3, 149.3, or 152.6 or
6 chapter 153 to receive continuing education credits regarding
7 the treatment of veterans, as defined in section 35.1, as
8 a condition of license renewal. Each licensing board, in
9 consultation with the veterans case manager established in
10 section 35A.19, shall have the authority to determine how often
11 a licensee must receive continuing education credits.

12 EXPLANATION

13 The inclusion of this explanation does not constitute agreement with
14 the explanation's substance by the members of the general assembly.

15 This bill relates to veterans health care services.

16 The bill creates the position of veterans case manager
17 within the department of veterans affairs. The veterans case
18 manager shall be appointed by the executive director of the
19 Iowa department of veterans affairs in consultation with the
20 director of the department of inspections and appeals and
21 the director of the department of human services, to assist
22 veterans in obtaining the greatest degree of health care and
23 health care benefits available and to promote policies that
24 would benefit veterans seeking health care. The veterans case
25 manager shall serve at the pleasure of, and report directly to,
26 the executive director of the department of veterans affairs.
27 The bill specifies the duties of a veterans case manager.

28 The bill requires the department of inspections and appeals
29 to adopt rules that require hospitals, upon identifying a
30 person admitted to the hospital as a veteran, to contact the
31 veterans case manager, assess whether the veteran is a danger
32 to the veteran's self or others, hold the veteran for 23 hours
33 if that person is experiencing or at risk of experiencing a
34 mental health crisis, assess whether the veteran is a danger to
35 the veteran's self or others prior to discharging the veteran,

1 and prevent the use of less or different care than nonveterans
2 solely because of a person's veteran status.

3 The bill requires the department of inspections and appeals,
4 in consultation with the department of veterans affairs, to
5 adopt rules that provide that if a person is eligible for
6 benefits through the United States department of veterans
7 affairs or any other third-party payor, specifying that
8 the payor of last resort for reimbursement to a hospital is
9 the medical assistance program established in Code chapter
10 249A. The rules shall also require the hospital to request
11 information from a person or a person's personal representative
12 regarding the person's veteran status and to report to the
13 veterans case manager only the names of persons identified as
14 potential veterans along with the names of their spouses and
15 any dependents. Information reported by the hospital shall be
16 verified by the department. These rules shall not apply to the
17 admission of a person for outpatient health services.

18 The bill requires the department of inspections and appeals
19 to adopt rules that require hospitals to collaborate with the
20 veterans case manager to identify barriers veterans may face
21 in obtaining prescription drug benefits, and require, upon
22 the admission of a person eligible for benefits through the
23 United States department of veterans affairs to a hospital, the
24 hospital to cooperate with the veterans case manager to assess
25 the extent for which the person is eligible for prescription
26 drug benefits.

27 The bill requires the board of medicine, board of dentistry,
28 board of physician assistants, board of podiatry, and board of
29 nursing to establish rules requiring a person licensed under
30 those boards to receive continuing education credits regarding
31 the treatment of veterans as a condition of license renewal.
32 Each licensing board, in consultation with the veterans case
33 manager, shall have the authority to determine how often a
34 licensee must receive continuing education credits.